

AGENDA



Thursday, March 27, 2008

**Neighborhood Planning & Zoning
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION**

Item No. 23

Subject: Authorize negotiation and execution of an amendment to the professional services agreement with ROMA Design Group, San Francisco, CA, to provide Phase 2 planning services as part of the Downtown Austin Plan, in an amount not to exceed \$200,000.

Amount and Source of Funding: Funding in the amount of \$100,000 is included in the Fiscal Year 2006-2007 Capital Budget of the Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department; \$100,000 is available in the Fiscal Year 2007-2008 Operating Budget of the Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department.

For More Information: Jim Robertson, 974-3564; Sylvia Arzola, 974-6448.

Prior Council Action: 12/15/05 – Council approved a resolution directing the City Manager to initiate and create the Downtown Austin Plan and Ordinance, which shall include, but not be limited to: (1) implementing land use ordinance modernizations; (2) identifying transit routes and other transit planning; (3) integrating the Downtown Neighborhood Plan and Convention Center Station Area Planning efforts; and (4) directing the City Manager to return to Council with the completed plan to be adopted by ordinance. 10/5/06 – Council approved an agreement with ROMA Design Group for professional planning services in an amount not to exceed \$600,000. 12/13/07 – Council directed staff to provide ROMA with the Density Task Force recommendations for incorporation into Phase II of the Downtown Plan. 2/14/08 – Council directed the staff to present Council with a proposed scope of work and budget to include transit planning within and outside the Downtown planning area boundaries. 2/28/08 – Council approved negotiation and execution of an amendment to the professional services agreement with ROMA Design Group to provide additional transit planning services outside the original scope of the Downtown Plan, in an amount not to exceed \$250,000.

On October 5, 2006, the City Council authorized the selection of ROMA Design Group (ROMA) to provide professional services for execution of the Downtown Austin Plan. The boundaries of the Downtown Plan are Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard on the north, IH-35 on the east, Town Lake on the south, and the west side of Lamar on the west. Funding in the amount of \$600,000 was approved for the Plan, which was to be conducted in two phases. Phase One (which consumed approximately \$250,000 of the project budget) resulted in the Phase One Report (“Phase One: Issues and Opportunities Report”), which was presented to Council on February 14, 2008.

On February 28, 2008, Council directed ROMA to undertake transit planning within and outside the Downtown planning area boundaries, for an amount not to exceed \$250,000, leaving approximately \$100,000 of the project budget available for Phase Two services.

The Phase One Report recommended an extensive and varied list of actions to be undertaken for achieving the vision for Downtown articulated in the Report. Those actions, which may be undertaken by ROMA, City staff, other governmental and public agencies, the private sector, or a combination of those entities, will unfold in the coming months and years.

City staff and ROMA recommend that certain key actions be undertaken by ROMA in the coming months, and Council approval is requested to negotiate and execute an amendment to the existing contract and

undertake these actions, including:

- Affordable Housing Strategy – This work would provide recommended strategies for achieving affordable housing Downtown, including recommended levels of affordability for rental and ownership housing.

- Density Bonus and Incentives Program – This work would provide recommended base densities and a program of density bonuses that address affordable housing, desired form, and community priorities.